

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 12323 061618Z

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ACTION VO-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEA-10 DHA-02 ORM-02 INSE-00

SCA-01 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 NSAE-00 /031 W

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R 061615Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4339

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF LE CVIS

SUBJECT: LEBANESE REFUGEES

REF: STATE 190983 LONDON 10850

1. DURING JULY, 1976 WE ISSUED 111 NONIMMIGRANT VISAS AND 11 IMMIGRANT VISAS TO LEBANESE. DURING THE PRE-CEEDING SIX MONTHS WE ISSUED A TOTAL OF 88 NONIMMIGRANT VISAS.

2. THE NUMBER OF LEBANESE DENIED NONIMMIGRANT VISAS IS UNKNOWN BECAUSE REFUSAL FIGURES ARE NOT MAINTAINED BY PLACE OF BIRTH OR NATIONALITY. A CONSENSUS OF THE STAFF INVOLVED IN NONIMMIGRANT VISA WORK ESTIMATE THAT DURING THE FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF 1976 WE HAD REFUSED NON-IMMIGRANT VISAS TO APPROXIMATELY 100 LEBANESE. THERE WERE NO IMMIGRANT REFUSALS OF LEBANESE DURING THE SAME PERIOD.

3. SINCE WE STARTED KEEPING RECORDS SEVERAL WEEKS AGO OF LEBANESE INQUIRING ABOUT TION TO THE UNITED STATES THERE HAVE BEEN NINE INQUIRIES FROM LEBANESE AND IRAQIS WHO HAD INITIATED IMMIGRANT VISA CASES IN BEIRUT. WE ARE WAITING TO LEARN WHERE BEIRUT FILES HAVE BEEN SENT IN ORDER TO REQUEST THEIR TRANSFER TO THIS OFFICE. THERE HAVE BEEN A HALF-DOZEN PERSONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 LONDON 12323 061618Z

AND TELEPHONE INQUIRIES REGARDING A RUMORED LEBANESE

REFUGEE PROGRAM.

4. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTIMATE HOW MANY LEBANESE IN ENGLAND WOULD APPLY FOR REFUGEE STATUS. IF SUCH A PROGRAM WAS STARTED THE NUMBERS APPLYING MAY RUN ANYWHERE FROM DOZENS TO POSSIBLY HUNDREDS. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THESE PERSONS WOULD BE TRUE "REFUGEES", IN THAT THEY WOULD ALL HAVE BEEN LEGALLY ADMITTED INTO ENGLAND, AND LIKELY TO BE FINANCIALLY WELL OFF. THEY MIGHT APPLY BECAUSE OF A PREFERENCE TO LIVE IN THE UNITED STATES, NOT BECAUSE OF ANY DESPERATE SITUATIONS.

5. AN EMBASSY OFFICER TELEPHONED THE LEBANON DESK OFFICER IN THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE AND RECEIVED MUCH OF THE SAME INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE EMBASSY TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE. BECAUSE THE LEBANESE WHO ENTERED THE UNITED KINGDOM DURING THE PAST MONTHS CAME IN WITH MANY THOUSANDS OF OTHERS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ASCERTAIN WITH ANY ACCURACY THE NUMBER OF LEBANESE FLEEING FROM LEBANON. THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES WITH WHOM WE HAVE COMMUNICATED ARE UNAWARE OF ANY PRESSURE FOR A REFUGEE PROGRAM IN ENGLAND AND THERE HAVE BEEN NO UNUSUAL NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR ASYLEE STATUS.

ARMSTRONG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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